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What are the requirements for supervision of Physical Therapy Aides?

The supervision requirements for physical therapy aides are specified in Section 1399 and 1399.1 of the Physical Therapy Regulations.

Requirements for Use of Aides.

A physical therapy aide is an unlicensed person who assists a physical therapist and may be utilized by a physical therapist in his or her practice by performing nonpatient related tasks, or by performing patient related tasks.

(a) As used in these regulations:

- (1) A "patient related task" means a physical therapy service rendered directly to the patient by an aide, excluding nonpatient related tasks as defined below.
- (2) A "nonpatient related task" means a task related to observation of the patient, transport of patients, physical support only during gait or transfer training, housekeeping duties, clerical duties and similar functions.

(b) "under the order, direction and immediate supervision" means:

- (1) Prior to the initiation of care, the physical therapist shall evaluate every patient prior to the performance of any patient related tasks by the aide. The evaluation shall be documented in the patient's record.
- (2) The physical therapist shall formulate and record in the patient's record a treatment program based upon the evaluation and any other information available to the physical therapist, and shall determine those patient related tasks which may be assigned to an aide. The patient's record shall reflect those patient related task that were rendered by the aide, including the signature of the aide who performed those tasks.
- (3) The physical therapist shall assign only those patient related tasks that can be safely and effectively performed by the aide. The supervising physical therapist shall be responsible at all time of the conduct of the aide while he or she is on duty.
- (4) The physical therapist shall provide continuous and immediate supervision of the aide. The physical therapist shall be in the same facility as and in the immediate proximity to the location where the aide is performing patient related tasks, and shall be readily available at all times to provide advise or instruction to the aide. When patient related tasks are provided a patient by an aide the supervising physical therapist shall at some point during the treatment day provide direct service to the patient as treatment for the patient's condition or to further evaluate and monitor the patient's progress, and so document in the patient's record.
- (5) The physical therapist shall perform periodic re-evaluation of the patient as necessary and make adjustment in the patient's treatment program. The re-evaluation shall be documented in the patient's record.
- (6) The supervising physical therapist shall countersign with their first initial and last name, and date all entries in the patient's record, on the same day as patient related tasks were provided by the aide.

NOTE: Authority cited: Section 2615, Business and Professions Code. Reference: Section 2630, Business and Professions Code.

1399.1 Limitations on Aides utilized.

A physical therapist shall not supervise more than one aide at any one time performing patient related tasks.

NOTE: Authority cited: Section 2615, Business and Professions Code. Reference: Section 2630, Business and Professions Code.